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SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR INR/R/MR, EAP/RSP/TC, EAP/PA, EAP/PD -
ROBERT PALLADINO
DEPARTMENT PASS AIT/WASHINGTON

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: SECRETARY POWELL'S BEIJING
TRIP

"[President Chen] Ruins [U.S. President] Bush's Big Plan, Forcing [Washington and Beijing to Strengthen the Mechanism] to Prevent [Taiwan] Independence and to Push for [Cross-Strait] Talks"

Chen Yi-hsin, professor at the American Studies Institute of Tamkang University, said in an op-ed piece in the conservative, pro-unification "United Daily News" (10/21):

"U.S. State Department Spokesman Richard Boucher said recently that when Secretary of State Colin Powell meets with Chinese President Hu Jintao on October 25, he 'expects to have an opportunity to respond to Beijing about U.S. arms sales to Taiwan.' Boucher's remarks indicate that the Bush administration is displeased with the small tricks President Chen Shui-bian played [with] his National Day speech. Boucher's remarks also show that Washington has decided to discuss with Beijing how to further strengthen an agreement reached between Vice President Dick Cheney and the Beijing leaders when [Cheney] visited China in April, in which both sides agreed to establish a mechanism to prevent Taiwan independence and to push for talks across the Taiwan Strait.

"The main reason that Washington is displeased [with Taipei] is that other than the goodwill gesture, Taipei failed to report to the United States in advance about those negative remarks Chen made [in his National Day speech]. .

"It is noteworthy that when meeting with the journalists in Washington in May, Powell confirmed that Washington and Beijing have started to work on resolutions to the Taiwan issue that is of mutual concern. Powell's remarks have indirectly confirmed that a cooperative mechanism has been established between Washington and Beijing since Cheney's China visit in an attempt to prevent Taiwan from altering the status quo. Nonetheless, the Bush administration has long been displeased about Taipei's refusal to listen to the United States' warnings and its insistence on the 'secret independence' route. Taipei toyed with the United States again this time using Chen's National Day speech, treating President Bush as a 'lame duck' president. This has, without doubt, pushed Washington to accelerate its pace of talking with Beijing on how to further strengthen their bilateral plan to prevent Taiwan independence and push for cross-Strait talks."

PAAL